DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 468 049 PS 030 624

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TITLE	Project-Based Learning with Young Children.
ISBN	ISBN-0-325-00447-1
PUB DATE	2002-00-00
NOTE	174p.; Foreword by Shelley Harwayne.
AVAILABLE FROM	Heinemann, Greenwood Publishing Group, Inc., 88 Post Road West, P.O. Box 5007, Westport, CT 06881-5007 ($19). Tel: 800-225-5800 (Toll Free); Fax: 203-750-9790; Web site: http://www.greenwood.com; Web site: http://www.heinemann.com.
PUB TYPE	Guides - Non-Classroom (055)
EDRS PRICE	Document Not Available From EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	Classroom Techniques; Decision Making; Documentation; *Elementary School Students; Elementary School Teachers; Interpersonal Communication; Kindergarten; *Kindergarten Children; Models; Preschool Teachers; Primary Education; Student Evaluation; *Student Projects; Student Responsibility; Student Role; Teacher Role; Teacher Student Relationship; *Teaching Methods
IDENTIFIERS	Project Approach (Katz and Chard)

ABSTRACT

Applied Learning projects are ventures whereby students connect school work to the real world and direct their own learning. This book describes how to use Applied Learning projects with students in kindergarten through second grade. Chapter 1 of the book describes the characteristics of Applied Learning projects and discusses the place of projects in the early childhood classroom. Chapter 2 discusses the organization of the Applied Learning classroom, the teacher's role, and the student's role. Chapter 3 details characteristics of the classroom community needed to support project work related to decision making, responsibility, and communication. Chapter 4 focuses on preparing children for working and talking together in groups of various sizes and conducting class meetings. Chapter 5 presents important issues to consider when starting project work and for each of their four major components: topic selection, project planning, plan implementation, and creating an end product. Chapter 6 focuses on the first project in an early childhood classroom, highlighting the teacher's role during each project component. Chapter 7 discusses how teachers can enhance skill learning by embedding academic, thinking, interpersonal, communication, and technological skills into the project tasks. Chapter 8 presents suggestions for assessing student skills, knowledge, and dispositions and feelings, as well as ways to evaluate work products. Chapter 9, the concluding chapter, offers advice for educators considering the use of projects with young children. Comments from primary level teachers and stories about students throughout the book illustrate important points. The book's six appendices include an annotated bibliography of 10 books about project-based learning, a list of possible project end-products, and suggested topics and research sources for Applied Learning projects. (Contains 96 references.) (KB)

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